

OPINION 1948

Hydrosaurus gouldii Gray, 1838 (currently *Varanus gouldii*) and *Varanus panoptes* Storr, 1980 (Reptilia, Squamata): specific names conserved by the designation of a neotype for *H. gouldii*

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Reptilia; Squamata; VARANIDAE; *Varanus gouldii*; *Varanus panoptes*; lizards; sand monitor; Gould's goanna; yellow-spotted monitor; Australia; New Guinea; Indonesia.

Ruling

- (1) Under the plenary power:
 - (a) all previous type fixations for the nominal species *Hydrosaurus gouldii* Gray, 1838 are hereby set aside and specimen BMNH 1997.1 in the Natural History Museum, London, collected from Karrakatta, Perth, Western Australia by G. Thompson on 29 September 1997 is designated as the neotype;
 - (b) the following names are hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy:
 - (i) *endrachtensis* Péron, 1807, as published in the binomen *Tupinambis endrachtensis*;
 - (ii) *ocellarius* Blyth, 1868, as published in the binomen *Hydrosaurus ocellarius*.
- (2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *gouldii* Gray, 1838, as published in the binomen *Hydrosaurus gouldii* and as defined by the neotype designated in (1)(a) above;
 - (b) *panoptes* Storr, 1980, as published in the binomen *Varanus panoptes* and as defined by the holotype (catalogue no. R44792 in the Western Australian Museum, Perth).
- (3) The following names are hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *endrachtensis* Péron, 1807, as published in the binomen *Tupinambis endrachtensis* and as suppressed in (1)(b)(i) above;
 - (b) *ocellarius* Blyth, 1868, as published in the binomen *Hydrosaurus ocellarius* and as suppressed in (1)(b)(ii) above.

History of Case 3042

An application for the conservation of the specific name of *Varanus gouldii* (Gray, 1838) for a monitor lizard found over most of Australia, and of *V. panoptes* Storr, 1980 for a species with a disjunct range in western and northern Australia, New Guinea and Indonesia, by the designation of a neotype for *H. gouldii* was received from Prof R.G. Sprackland, Prof H.M. Smith and Dr P.D. Strimple on 19 December 1996. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 54: 95–99 (June 1997). Notice of the case was sent to appropriate journals.

It was noted on the voting paper that a similar application was submitted by Dr Glenn M. Shea (*University of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia*) and Dr Harold G.

Cogger (*The Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia*) slightly later than that by Sprackland, Smith & Strimple.

A comment in support of the application from Dr D.R. King (*Western Australian Museum, Perth, Australia*) was published in BZN 54: 249–250 (December 1997).

A comment from Shea & Cogger, published in BZN 55: 106–111 (June 1998), supported the purpose of the application. They provided evidence that the specimen designated by Mertens (1958) as the lectotype of *V. gouldii* was unlikely to have been original material seen by Gray (1838), and noted that the designation was therefore of doubtful validity. Shea & Cogger proposed (BZN 55: 109, paras. 13 and 14) that a well preserved specimen with precise locality, formerly of the Western Australian Museum, Perth, and now kept in the reptile collections of the Natural History Museum, London, should be designated as the neotype of *V. gouldii*, rather than the old, stuffed and mounted specimen, lacking locality information, proposed by Sprackland et al. Shea & Cogger also proposed (BZN 55: 110) that two putative senior subjective synonyms of *V. gouldii* and *V. panoptes* (*Tupinambis endrachtensis* Péron, 1807 and *Hydrosaurus ocellarius* Blyth, 1868 respectively) should be suppressed.

A comment from Dr W. Böhme & Dr T. Ziegler (*Zoologisches Forschungsinstitut und Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, Germany*) was published in BZN 55: 173–174 (September 1998). They advocated the use of *V. flavirufus* Mertens, 1958 for the species found over most of Australia and *V. gouldii* for that with the disjunct range, as would result from acceptance of Mertens's lectotype designation for *V. gouldii*.

A reply by the authors of the application to the comments by Shea & Cogger and by Böhme & Ziegler was published in BZN 55: 175–176 (September 1998). Sprackland et al. welcomed the modifications and additions to the original application proposed by Shea & Cogger.

A comment opposing the application from Mr R.T. Hoser (*Doncaster, Victoria, Australia*) was published in BZN 56: 66–70 (March 1999). He quoted a statement made by Sprackland in 1995, but at that time Sprackland was not fully aware of the Code's provisions relating to type specimens, nor of the status of the specimens in the Natural History Museum, London. A reply from Mrs Anthea Gentry (*ICZN Secretariat, London, U.K.*) was published at the same time.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 September 1999 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the combined proposals published in BZN 54: 98 and 55: 109 (paras. 13 and 14) and 110. At the close of the voting period on 1 December 1999 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes — 20: Bock, Bouchet (part), Brothers, Cocks, Cogger, Eschmeyer, Heppell, Kerzhner, Kraus, Macpherson, Mahnert, Mawatari, Minelli, Nielsen, Papp, Patterson, Savage, Schuster, Song, Štys

Negative votes — 1: Dupuis.

No vote was received from Martins de Souza.

Lehtinen and Ride were on leave of absence.

Bouchet voted for the designation of a neotype for *Varanus gouldii* but not for the suppression of the specific names of *Tupinambis endrachtensis* Péron, 1807 and *Hydrosaurus ocellarius* Blyth, 1868. Brothers commented: 'It is obvious that whatever

the ruling on *Varanus gouldii* and *V. panoptes*, some workers will not be satisfied. However, my view is that approval of the proposed neotype for *V. gouldii* will provide the clearest solution'.

Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on an Official List and an Official Index by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

endrachtensis, *Tupinambis*, Péron, 1807, *Voyage de découvertes aux Terres Australes, exécuté par ordre de Sa Majesté L'Empereur et Roi, sur les Corvettes le Géographe, le Naturaliste, et la Goélette le Casuarina, pendant les années 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803 et 1804*, vol. 1, p. 118.

gouldii, *Hydrosaurus*, Gray, 1838, *Annals of Natural History; or, Magazine of Zoology, Botany and Geology*, **1**: 394.

ocellarius, *Hydrosaurus*, Blyth, 1868, in Theobald, W., *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, **37**(2)(extra number): 21.

panoptes, *Varanus*, Storr, 1980, *Records of the Western Australian Museum*, **8**(2): 273.